

States, so frequently occurring from the colonial officers, scattered over our hemisphere, and in our neighbourhood, can only be repaired by a resort to their respective governments in Europe, that it will be impossible to guard against the most serious inconveniences. The late events at New Orleans strongly manifest the necessity of placing a power somewhere nearer to us, capable of correcting and controlling the mischievous proceedings of such officers towards our citizens, without which a few individuals, not always among the wisest or best of men, may at any time threaten the good understanding of the two nations. The distance between the United States and the old continent, and the mortifying delays of explanations and negotiations across the Atlantic, on emergencies in our neighbourhood, render such a provision indispensable, and it cannot be long before all the governments of Europe, having American colonies, must see the necessity of making it. This object, therefore, will likewise claim your special attention.

It only remains to suggest, that, considering the possibility of some intermediate violences between citizens of the United States and the French or Spaniards in consequence of the interruption of our right of deposit, and the probability that considerable damages will have been occasioned by that measure to citizens of the United States, it will be proper that indemnification in the latter case be provided for, and that in the former it shall not be taken on either side as a ground or pretext for hostilities.

These instructions, though as full as they could be conveniently made, will necessarily leave much to your discretion. For the proper exercise of it, the president relies on your information, your judgment, and your fidelity to the interests of your country.

JAMES MADISON.

---

*Mr. Madison, Secretary of State of the United States, to Messrs. Livingston and Monroe, dated April, 18, 1803.*

[EXTRACT.]

A month having elapsed since the departure of Mr. Monroe, it may be presumed that by the time this reaches you, communications will have passed with the French government sufficiently explaining its views towards the United States and preparing the way for the ulterior instructions which the president thinks proper should now be given.